# 3. Existing Conditions

This chapter presents a general description of Chula Vista's land uses, a summary of public input obtained throughout the Pedestrian Master Plan planning process, and an inventory of existing pedestrian facilities in the City of Chula Vista.

#### Land Uses

One of the most vibrant areas of pedestrian activity in the City of Chula Vista is its downtown, known as the Third Avenue Village. The "Village" is home to over 350 businesses and possesses a unique character with its treelined streets, shopping, dining, public art and inviting pedestrian streetscape. The Third Avenue Village is considered the historic heart of Chula Vista and plays host to a number of public events including a weekly Farmer's Market, a seasonal Antique Auto Show and annual events including Cinco de Mayo, the Lemon Festival, Pet Fest and the Starlight Parade in December. There are twenty-one other major commercial/shopping destination centers within Chula Vista including the Chula Vista Center, the Otay Ranch Town Center, the Bonita Point Plaza, and the Center. These destinations Village predominantly vehicular-oriented and typically contain chain retail and big box retail, in addition to entertainment uses.



Residential development in Chula Vista exists almost uniformly throughout the city limits with older higher density neighborhoods on a grid street system in the west and newer master planned communities with curvilinear streets, cul-de-sacs, and commercial malls and business parks in the east. Chula Vista is home to many major employers including several major medical centers, Goodrich Aerospace, Raytheon Systems, and Hitachi Home Electronics. Commercial and industrial uses are spread throughout Chula Vista with centers of activity near downtown Chula Vista, the waterfront, and major corridors such as East H Street, Otay Lakes Road, Telegraph Canyon Road, Olympic Parkway and Main Street. Tourist attractions include the Knott's Soak City water park, the US Olympic Training Center, the Chula Vista Harbor and future amenities to be developed as part of the Bayfront Master Plan.

# **Existing Pedestrian Facilities**

The most basic elements of the pedestrian network are sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb ramps. Sidewalks provide a space for pedestrian activity separated from motor vehicle traffic. Curb ramps provide a transition between the raised sidewalk and the crosswalk for persons using mobility assistance devices. These elements should form a connected network that is functional, safe, and encourages people to walk. The following sections describe the key elements of the City of Chula Vista's pedestrian network. Gaps and areas of low pedestrian facility coverage are highlighted.

#### **Sidewalks**

The City of Chula Vista maintains a shapefile of missing sidewalk available to map and analyze in geographic information system (GIS) software. There are approximately 59.4 miles of missing sidewalks in Chula Vista.

**Table 3.1** summarizes miles of missing sidewalks by City of Chula Vista planning area. A majority of the missing sidewalk mileage is found in the Southwest Planning Area (43.8 percent), followed by the East Planning Area (29.3 percent), the Northwest Planning Area (17.8 percent), and the Bayfront Planning Area (9.1 percent).



Figure 3-1 displays the roughly 59.4 miles of missing sidewalks in the City of Chula Vista.

Table 3.1
City of Chula Vista Missing Sidewalks by Planning Area

Planning Area	Miles of Missing Sidewalk (one or both sides of roadway)	Percent of Total
Bayfront	5.4 miles	9.1%
Northwest	10.6 miles	17.8%
Southwest	26.0 miles	43.8%
East	17.4 miles	29.3%
TOTAL	59.4 miles	100%

Source: Alta Planning + Design, City of Chula Vista Deficiency Survey, March 2010.

**Table 3.2** displays sidewalk status on public roadways, including roadways which have not yet been officially accepted by the City. There are approximately 473 centerline miles of public roadways in Chula Vista, with about 91 percent having sidewalks on both sides of the roadway.<sup>8</sup> Almost 5 percent of public roadways have sidewalks on only one side of the roadway, and roughly 4 percent of public roadways have no sidewalk on either side of the roadway. The Southwest Planning Area has the greatest amount of public roadways without sidewalk on either side of the roadway (approximately 8 miles of roadway with no sidewalk).

Table 3.2
City of Chula Vista Sidewalk Status on Public Roadways

	ĺ	Sidewalk Status on Public Roadways					
Planning Area	Miles of Public Roadways	With Sidewalks (Both Sides)		With Sidewalks (One Side Only)		No Sidewalk (Both Sides)	
		Miles	Percent of Total	Miles	Percent of Total	Miles	Percent of Total
Bayfront	7.8 miles	3.7 miles	47.4%	2.8 miles	35.9%	1.3 miles	16.7%
Northwest	95.8 miles	88.9 miles	92.8%	3.2 miles	3.3%	3.7 miles	3.9%
Southwest	87.3 miles	69.6 miles	79.7%	9.4 miles	10.8%	8.3 miles	9.5%
East	282.1 miles	270.2 miles	95.8%	6.4 miles	2.3%	5.5 miles	1.9%
TOTAL	473.0 miles	432.4	91.4%	21.8	4.6%	18.8	4.0%

Source: Alta Planning + Design, City of Chula Vista Survey, March 2010

## **Curb Ramps**

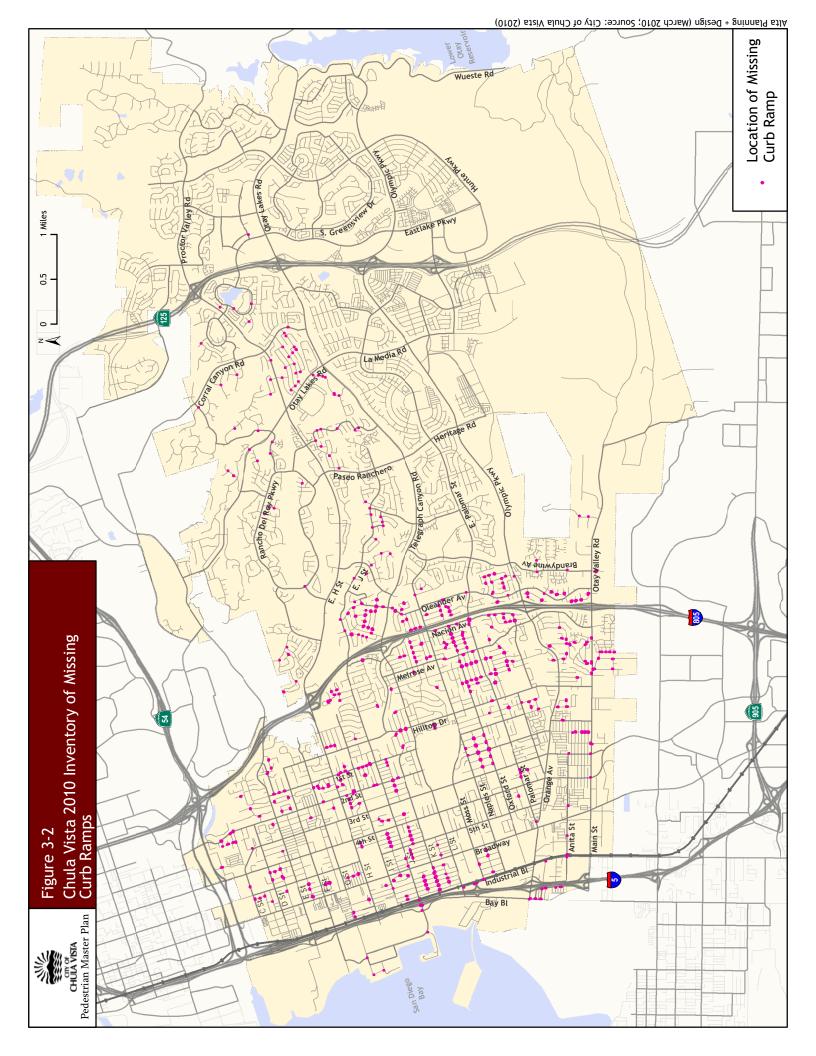
According to the most recent curb ramp inventory there are 877 missing curb ramps in the City of Chula Vista. **Figure 3-2** displays missing curb ramps in Chula Vista, while **Table 3.3** summarizes missing curb ramps by east and west. A far greater number of missing curb ramps, 656, are found in the west than in the east.

Table 3.3 City of Chula Vista Missing Curb Ramp Count by East and West

	<u> </u>	J
Area	Total Missing Curb Ramps	Percent of Total
East	221	25%
West	656	75%
TOTAL	877	100%

Source: Alta Planning + Design, City of Chula Vista Survey, 2010

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> There are 421.03 centerline miles of accepted public streets as of 6/30/2009.



## **Public Input**

This section summarizes the public outreach effort undertaken as part of the Chula Vista Pedestrian Master Plan planning process, and then provides a synopsis of Chula Vista community members' walking behaviors, attitudes, issues and recommendations for improvements. The input obtained through this extensive outreach effort supported identification and prioritization of program and infrastructure project recommendations presented in Chapter 5.0 of this Plan.

### Public Involvement Strategy

The public involvement strategy entailed convening a Project Working Group (PWG), attending community meetings to survey community members, maintaining a project website, and holding four public workshops to gain feedback on key findings and recommendations.

The PWG met five times throughout the planning process to advise the City on the Plan development. The purpose of the PWG meetings was to present work products to the group and ask PWG members to provide substantive input and direction for future project tasks. Thus far, the PWG has provided valuable feedback on the existing conditions analysis; goals, objectives and policies; and the project identification and prioritization process.

A significant portion of the public involvement strategy was devoted to reaching out to the community at large by attending a combination of



community meetings and school-based meetings conducted by WalkSanDiego as a part of the Chula Vista Community-Based Transportation Plan: "Kids Walk & Bike to School" program. The results of the school-based meetings were used by the Pedestrian Master Plan project team to generate school area deficiency maps that are presented in Chapter 6. Community and school-based meetings were attended to introduce the purpose and process of the Plan, invite participation and collect comments. The following community and school-based meetings were attended:

- Lauderbach Park Re-Opening (September 9, 2008)
- Southwestern United in Action Meeting (September 25, 2008)
- Lauderbach Elementary (November 5, 2008)
- Montgomery Elementary (November 20, 2008)
- Rosebank Elementary (November 25, 2008)
- Rohr Elementary (December 5, 2008)
- Loma Verde Elementary (December 12, 2008)
- Mueller Elementary (January 13, 2009)
- Northwest Civic Association General Meeting (May 11, 2009)
- Southwest Civic Association General Meeting (May 18, 2009)

At these ten community events, an overview of the Pedestrian Master Plan project was presented and pedestrian surveys were distributed and collected to record community input. The survey distributed during these events was identical to the online survey accessible via the project website. This allowed the project team to combine the online survey responses with the responses collected during community meetings and during other events not attended by the project team. The public involvement strategy resulted in the collection of a total of 314 surveys, including 41 from the project website and 273 from community and school-based meetings. The survey findings are summarized in the following section.

The project website, navigable in English and Spanish, was an important part of the outreach effort. The project website contained project-related information, including an overview of the planning process and status, documents, and links to relevant resources. The website was also equipped to receive input directly from viewers via the online pedestrian survey, an email link to provide comments, and the contact information of the City and consultant project managers.

Finally, four public workshops were held at community meeting spaces, generally representative of Chula Vista's four quadrants, to encourage participation. The purpose of the public workshops was to explain the planning process, familiarize the community with the content of the draft Plan, and collect public comment on the content of the Plan. Since these workshops were geared toward presenting information and recording responses, they were held in an open house format. Each station was hosted by a knowledgeable staff person who was able to answer questions and record comments.



The input obtained during the workshops assisted with revising the Plan elements. The workshops were held jointly with WalkSanDiego, who is leading the City's Community-Based Transportation Plan: "Kids Walk & Bike to School" project.

The open houses were organized into four stations with boards covering the following topics:

- Existing Conditions and Demand Analysis
- Goals, Objectives, Policies and Non-Infrastructure Programs
- School Area Programs and High Priority Improvement Projects (led by WalkSanDiego)
- Citywide High Priority Improvement Projects

A total of 75 people attended the four workshops to provide their input on the Plan. The raw comments recorded on comment cards and easel paper tablets are presented in **Appendix B**.

## Summary of Public Input

This section summarizes survey responses and public comments collected by the project team while attending community and school-based meetings. Surveys and comments obtained via the project website are also incorporated in the following summary. **Tables 3.4** through **Table 3.11** present key results from the 310 pedestrian surveys collected to date.

The survey asked respondents about three key pedestrian-related factors: walking behaviors, experiences with deficiencies and pedestrian improvement preferences.

#### **Walking Behaviors**

The pedestrian survey asked respondents about their typical walking behaviors including frequency, distance and motivations for walking. **Table 3.4** summarizes survey respondents' motivations for walking. As shown, exercise is the most significant factor motivating people to walk (76 percent). Walking to school, for shopping and to conduct other errands also ranked relatively high as reasons for walking. These results suggest that many people in Chula Vista walk for recreational purposes but also choose walking as a form of transportation because of the health benefits derived from walking. It should be noted that these survey results are not necessarily representative of the general population.

Table 3.4 Motivations for Walking

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Purpose	Percent of Respondents				
For Recreation/Exercise	75.5%				
To get to/from School	54.2%				
For Shopping/Errands	31.6%				
To Socialize	21.3%				
To get to/from Transit	20.6%				
To Walk my Dog/Pet	19.4%				
To get to/from Work	8.4%				
I Never Walk	4.2%				
Other	11.6%				

Source: Alta Planning + Design, 12/18/2009

**Table 3.5** exhibits the relatively high walking frequency of survey respondents. The majority of community members surveyed reported that they walk daily (66 percent) and 86 percent walk at least once a week. Very few respondents indicated that they never walk (2 percent).

Table 3.5
Walking Frequency

Frequency	Percent of Respondents		
Daily	66.1%		
Weekly	20.0%		
Monthly	3.5%		
Rarely	8.1%		
Never	2.3%		

Source: Alta Planning + Design, 12/18/2009

Of those who reported walking in Chula Vista, 82 percent walk five miles or less per week. **Table 3.6** shows the distribution of survey respondents' average walking distances with the majority of respondents reporting average weekly walking distances of less than two miles.

Table 3.6
Average Walking Distance per Week

Distance	Percent of Respondents
Under 2 miles	47.5%
2-5 miles	34.8%
6-10 miles	7.7%
More than 10 miles	10.0%

Source: Alta Planning + Design, 12/18/2009

**Table 3.7** displays the typical time of day that respondents walk in Chula Vista, which is primarily during weekday mornings.

Table 3.7
Typical Time of Day for Walking

Time of Day	Percent of Respondents
Weekday mornings	71.3%
Weekday evenings	51.1%
Weekday mid-days	35.2%
Weekend mornings	23.5%
Weekend evenings	21.2%
Weekend mid-days	15.6%

Source: Alta Planning + Design, 12/18/2009

#### Experiences with Deficiencies

As illustrated in **Table 3.8**, pedestrians in Chula Vista tend to walk on the sidewalks of major roads (79 percent) and the sidewalks of back streets (46 percent). Fewer people have access to or take advantage of walking on trails (16 percent) or around the Bay (8 percent) according to survey respondents.

Table 3.8
Walking Facilities Used Most Commonly

Frequency	Percent of Respondents		
Sidewalks (major streets)	79.2%		
Sidewalks (back streets)	46.0%		
Trails	16.1%		
Paved off-street walkways	11.1%		
The Bay	7.7%		

Source: Alta Planning + Design, 12/18/2009

Based on respondents' experiences walking in Chula Vista, people were asked to describe their general impressions of walking. **Table 3.9** summarizes survey respondents' general impressions of walking in Chula Vista.

Table 3.9
General Impressions of Walking in Chula Vista

Condition	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
"I feel safe from cars."	5.6%	23.0%	13.1%	36.7%	21.6%
"I feel safe from crime."	7.3%	28.0%	21.0%	25.2%	18.5%
"It is easy to cross the streets."	6.3%	23.7%	17.4%	36.2%	16.4%
"The sidewalks are in good condition."	7.9%	26.1%	21.9%	26.9%	17.2%
"The sidewalks are wide enough."	7.2%	29.8%	19.4%	28.4%	15.2%
"The sidewalks are clean."	8.0%	36.4%	24.1%	18.2%	13.3%
"There is enough lighting."	4.6%	15.6%	20.1%	35.3%	24.4%
"There is enough shade on my walk."	4.5%	18.5%	25.4%	32.1%	19.5%
"My walk is interesting."	11.8%	37.2%	26.6%	13.4%	11.0%

Source: Alta Planning + Design, 12/18/2009

Of the nine conditions presented in Table 3.9, more people either disagree or strongly disagree with seven of the statements, including "I feel safe from cars," "It is easy to cross the streets," "There is enough lighting" and "The sidewalks are in good condition." The two statements respondents agreed or strongly agreed with were, "The sidewalks are clean" (44 percent) and "My walk is interesting" (49 percent). This indicates that overall survey respondents have a more negative than positive view of the pedestrian environment in Chula Vista.



Survey respondents were also asked to identify obstacles that prevent them from walking in Chula Vista m

obstacles that prevent them from walking in Chula Vista more frequently. The primary disincentives to walking according to respondents are concerns about safety, inadequate lighting and missing sidewalks and/or curb ramps. These results are consistent with those presented in Table 3.9. **Table 3.10** details issues that inhibit survey respondents from walking regularly.

One of the central purposes of surveying Chula Vista community members was to identify specific pedestrian deficiencies in the walking environment, and importantly, the locations of those deficiencies in order to help inform recommended project improvements. **Figure 3-3** displays the locations of pedestrian issues identified by the public. This information was also integrated as a factor in the project prioritization process. As Figure 3-3 shows, considerably more comments were made about deficient locations in the western portions of Chula Vista.

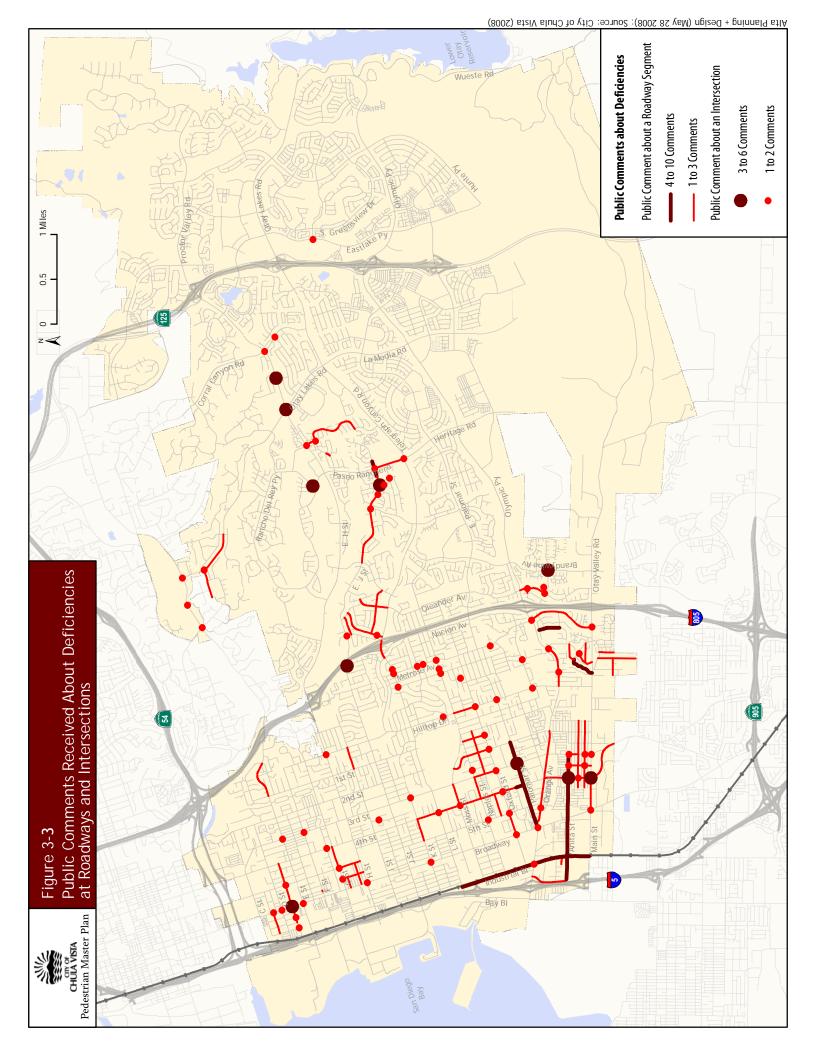


Table 3.10 Factors Discouraging Walking

Issue	Percent of Respondents
Concerns About Safety	44.9%
Insufficient Lighting	40.9%
Lack of Sidewalks, Gaps in Sidewalks, and/or Missing Curb Ramps	36.0%
Sidewalks are in Poor Condition	25.1%
Lack of Time	22.1%
Destinations are too Far Away	20.5%
Trash/Blight	12.5%
Barriers on Sidewalks (e.g. utility poles)	10.2%
Weather	8.9%
Other	16.8%

Source: Alta Planning + Design, 12/18/2009

#### Pedestrian Improvement Preferences

In addition to asking survey respondents to describe their experiences walking in Chula Vista and to identify deficiencies, community members were also asked to rank their preferences for various pedestrian programs and improvement project types. **Table 3.11** displays the results to this question.

Table 3.11 Preference for Various Pedestrian Improvements

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Improvement	Lowest Priority	Somewhat of a Priority	More of a Priority	Highest Priority			
Infill of Sidewalk Gaps	8.5%	15.5%	27.5%	48.5%			
Improvements to Crosswalks that are Uncontrolled of Difficult to Cross	2.6%	7.4%	27.9%	62.1%			
Adding or Improving Signalized Intersections	5.7%	13.4%	32.2%	48.7%			
Adding or Improving Pedestrian Signage	8.6%	15.0%	30.1%	46.3%			
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Improvements	5.3%	21.8%	25.2%	47.7%			
Traffic Calming Projects	3.7%	15.8%	30.9%	49.6%			
Safe Routes to School Programs	3.7%	9.2%	21.3%	65.8%			
Pedestrian Awareness and Education Programs	9.1%	20.5%	29.2%	41.2%			

Source: Alta Planning + Design, 12/18/2009

As shown in Table 3.11, survey respondents demonstrate a strong desire for a variety of pedestrian improvements, particularly improvements to difficult or uncontrolled crosswalks and Safe Routes to School programs.